

## Message Text

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ACTION COA-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3817

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TAGS: EFIS, CA, US, UR, JA

SUBJECT: FISHERIES: NORTH PACIFIC HALIBUT STOCKS

FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF JUNE 18 NEWS RELEASE ISSUED  
IN OTTAWA BY FISHERIES MINISTER DAVIS EXPRESSING  
HIS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER LACK OF PROGRESS IN RECENT  
HALIBUT TALKS IN HALIFAX:

BEGIN VERBATIM TEXT: FISHERIES MINISTER JACK DAVIS  
SAID TODAY THAT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED OVER THE LACK OF  
PROGRESS ON SUBSTANTIAL ISSUES AT THE SPECIAL CANADA-  
USA-USSR HALIBUT MEETINGS RECENTLY CONCLUDED IN  
HALIFAX.

"THE DECLINE IN THE HALIBUT STOCKS IN THE NORTH  
PACIFIC IS LARGELY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE LARGE INCIDENTAL  
CATCH OF HALIBUT TAKEN BY THE HUGE DISTANT WATER TRAWL  
FLEETS OF THE SOVIET UNION AND JAPAN", MR. DAVIS SAID.

"WE ASKED THAT THE SOVIET UNION ADOPT MEASURES  
SIMILAR TO THOSE TAKEN BY JAPAN IN THE BERING SEA,  
AND MAKE OTHER ADJUSTMENTS IN THE GULF OF ALASKA.

EARLIER THIS YEAR JAPAN AGREED TO APPLY SOME  
DOMESTIC MEASURES IN THE EASTERNBERING SEA TO

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AVOID THE INCIDENTAL CAPTURE OF HALIBUT AND WE WERE  
HOPEFUL THAT THE U.S.S.R. WOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE

SIMILAR ADJUSTMENTS TO THEIR FISHERIES."

THE MINISTER SAID THAT DESPITE THE LACK OF CONCRETE ACTION AGREED TO BY THE SOVIETS, A START HAD BEEN MADE. THE SOVIET OFFICIALS INDICATED THAT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE HALIBUT CATCHES BY THEIR VESSELS WERE LARGE ENOUGH TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE HALIBUT STOCKS. THEY ARE PREPARED, HOWEVER, TO ALLOW CANADIAN AND U.S. SCIENTISTS TO BE PLACED ON BOARD SOVIET FISHING VESSELS TO STUDY THE SITUATION AT FIRST HAND BEGINNING WITH NEXT WINTER'S FISHERY. THE SOVIETS ALSO INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONTINUE TALKS ON POSSIBLE CONSERVATION MEASURES.

MR. DAVIS STATED THAT THESE PLANS FOR SCIENTIFIC STUDY WERE A USEFUL FIRST STEP AND WOULD BE FOLLOWED UP IMMEDIATELY BY CANADA. SUCH STUDIES, HE CONSIDERED, WOULD CERTAINLY IMPROVE THE BASIS FOR THE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ON POSSIBLE CONSERVATION ACTION. END VERBATIM TEXT.  
PORTER

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